

## Office of Professional Accountability (OPA)

### Commendations & Complaints Report

### April 2003

#### Commendations:

Commendations Received in April: 39

Commendations Received to Date: 309

Rank	Summary
4 Officers	We would sincerely like to thank the officers who were able to effectively use their training with the Electronic Tracking System (ETS). During a bank robbery the ETS assisted the officers in making a rapid arrest of the bank robber and full recovery of the stolen money. Great job!
Sergeant	My son was shot at the Franklin vs. Garfield game. After hearing the shot, the Police Sergeant found my injured son and administered first aid. Because of your quick thinking and courage, you saved my son's life and should be awarded the highest award possible. Thank you.
3 Officers	I would like to express my gratitude to SPD instructors for inviting me to operational training. After taking the course, I developed a program for our department that mirrors your program. The citizens of Seattle and the Seattle Police Department are truly fortunate to have a program of this caliber for its patrol personnel.
2 Officers	Thank you for assisting the United States Coast Guard (USCG) in apprehending a suspicious person. The two officers responded quickly and brought the potentially dangerous suspect into custody. Thank you for your eagerness, professionalism, and devotion to our joint Homeland Security mission.
2 Sergeants & 3 Officers	On behalf of the City Council please extend appreciation and thanks for the quick response provided by the Seattle Police Department, when a distressed caller indicated their intent to harm themselves during a council meeting. Two Sergeants and three officers responded quickly and stayed during the meeting to ensure that all went smoothly.
Sergeant	I would like to thank the Sergeant who spoke to the "Critical Mass" bike riders. Before the ride began the Sergeant engaged in a good-natured dialogue with the riders (an act of courage in itself!) He explained the bicycling laws and stated that traffic blocking would not be tolerated, but also put us at ease with some personal stories about his rides on SR 99. What is important is the way the Sergeant conducted himself; he was very personable. He set the tone for the entire ride, which kept this protest from exploding into a police versus protestor confrontation.
Dispatcher	I want to say thank you to the Dispatcher who called me back so promptly about a theft that I reported. I appreciate the efficiency and attention with which my call was handled.
Detective	The State of Washington Department of Licensing would like to thank the Detective who graciously agreed to speak to our training class of Security Officers. He spoke about homeland security issues and basic terrorism pre-incident indicators. The detective is a dynamic speaker with an obvious heartfelt passion for his work.
Officer	Officer responded to a residential burglary. She did an outstanding job of processing the crime scene gathering statements, fingerprints, and taking numerous pictures. Evidence found 5 positive matches, which lead to an arrest. This was an outstanding investigation with great attention to detail.
Captain, Sergeant, Detective &	We would like to thank several officers who went above the call of duty to help address a problem person in our neighborhood. After I called 911 about a strange

4 Officers	man in our neighborhood, the Police found that he had stolen the vehicle that he was in, along with several credit cards. He was booked into jail and then released a few days later. He came back to our neighborhood and sought revenge by smashing windows and cars. The police were called again. In fact they patrolled our neighborhood for a few days around the clock. The police staked out the suspect's house, took him into custody, and charged him. Thanks for making our neighborhood safe again.
Officer	We want to commend the officer that helped us downtown on Saturday. We were visiting from Spokane and got turned around downtown. We stopped behind an officer parked along the street and asked for direction back to I-90. He started to explain the directions and then said "follow me." He led us to I-90 and we were on our way. We are very thankful for his assistance.
2 Officers	Great job on an investigation involving inappropriate juvenile interactions. The responsible individual plead guilty to the alleged offense and is looking at doing a year in juvenile detention when he's sentenced. Good work!
Civilian	Thank you for filming the Lieutenant and I for the Elder Care video. You went the extra mile and filmed elderly crime victims, their interviews, as well as scenes from an elder care investigation. Your work is absolutely superb!
Officer	An Officer responded to my call about my stolen car. He ran a search to see if my car had been towed. He not only located my car, but he drove me to the tow company and stayed until my car was released to me. This is a clear example of going the extra mile.
Officer	Thank you for the wonderful support you have given the U.S. Postal Service during our recent bomb scare. After the bomb squad determined that the "bomb" was not real, one of the officers took the time to talk to the postal staff. He was extremely kind and reassuring to our employees.
Community Service Officer	We would like to acknowledge the Community Service Officer who responded to our call about our 12 year-old foster daughter who ran away. He handled the situation with great confidence, charm and professionalism. His personable nature, words and demeanor gave us great comfort in a difficult time.
Officer	We want to thank the officer that recovered our stolen power tools. We feel lucky to have been helped by a very dedicated officer.
Civilian	I would like to congratulate you and your department on your fine work. The video that was produced for the Hispanic population clearly shows your department's efforts to reach out and educate the Hispanic community. I am thrilled that you and your staff have begun this process.
Detective	As a victim of Domestic violence, I want to thank you for loaning me a cell phone. Thank goodness I haven't had to use it. I am so fortunate to have had you work on my case. You do wonderful work and are a real asset to the Seattle Police Department.
Detective	On behalf on Bon Marche stores I would like to acknowledge the contributions of one of your Detectives for his work on the Joint Terrorism Task Force Team. He conducted an invaluable training session to a group of 70 Loss Prevention Executives, representing 40 Bon Marche stores. Thank you for the motivational, informative training.
Civilian	Congratulations on receiving the Copernicus Sun Award. The award was developed by the Commodity Team and the city-wide Copernicus Department Coordinators to recognize individuals and teams who have achieved significant cost benefits for the City. Thank you for your efforts and congratulations.

## APRIL 2003 Closed Cases:

*Cases involving alleged misconduct of officers and employees in the course of their official public duties are summarized below. Identifying information has been removed.*

*Cases are reported by allegation type. One case may be reported under more than one category.*

### UNNECESSARY FORCE

Synopsis	Action Taken
Complainant alleged an officer used unnecessary force against him while he was handcuffed and sitting on a curb.	There were inconsistencies in the description of the named officer as provided by the complainant and his friend. No other civilian or officer witness could provide information that would reliably identify any particular officer. Despite being shown several photo montages, the complainant was unable to positively identify any of the officers at the scene as the one he alleged assaulted him. Finding – ADMINISTRATIVELY INACTIVATED.
Complainant alleged officers used unnecessary force on his son during his arrest for domestic violence.	Investigation showed that force was used to control the fleeing and resisting subject. The force was reported and documented per Department policy. The subject's claim that he was not resisting was refuted by the evidence, statements of officers and independent witnesses, and his own poor credibility. Finding – UNFOUNDED.
Complainant alleged the named officer used unnecessary force during a response to a 911 call alleging the complainant had made threats with a gun.	The investigation showed the officer used minimal force to get the complainant's attention and to control his movements when guns were found in the car. Finding – EXONERATED.
Complainant alleged that during a demonstration, the named officer knocked her down with his bicycle.	The evidence showed that any contact between the complainant and the officer's bike was accidental and unintentional. Finding – UNFOUNDED.
Complainant alleged unnecessary force while in a precinct holding cell.	The investigation showed that the complainant's descriptions of what occurred are inconsistent and not credible. The witness, a co-arrestee, gave a statement that conflicts with that of the complainant. Further, the witness would not have been able to see the cell where the complainant was held. Finding – UNFOUNDED.
Complainant alleged named officers pushed her to the ground and detained her for 45 minutes without telling her why	During the investigation, the complainant admitted she was not pushed, the officers simply applied pressure on her shoulder until she "slunk" into a seated position. Further, there were several inconsistencies in the complainant's account. Finding – UNFOUNDED.
Complainant alleged the named officer used unnecessary force during an arrest following a vehicle pursuit.	Investigation showed the complainant was intoxicated, had attempted to elude police, and resisted arrest. The force alleged by the complainant is consistent with the force reported by the named officer. Finding – EXONERATED.
Complainant alleged named officer used unnecessary force during his arrest for a drug violation.	Evidence produced in investigation was inconclusive regarding whether the force admittedly used was excessive. Finding – NOT SUSTAINED.

**IMPROPER SEARCH**

Synopsis	Action Taken
Complainant alleged the named officer conducted an improper search during a pat-down for weapons.	The investigation supported the officer's description of pat-down of the groin area done per Department policy and training. Finding – UNFOUNDED.

**CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN OFFICER**

Synopsis	Action Taken
Complainant alleged the named employee was rude and profane during a dispute with a transient over an open container.	Investigation revealed that the incident did not occur as the complainant described. Finding – UNFOUNDED.
Complainant alleged that while the named officer was interviewing her, he poked her in the chest with his finger. She further alleges an unknown officer failed to return her driver's license.	Two independent witnesses state that the officer did not poke the subject in the chest. Finding – UNFOUNDED. There is not enough evidence to clearly determine if a driver's license was taken or not. Finding – NOT SUSTAINED.
Complainants alleged that an officer taking the civil service test for promotion to sergeant may have had answers to the oral portion of the exam.	Investigation produced evidence to substantiate that an employee who had access to the answers to the oral portion of the exam provided the answers to another employee who was taking the exam. The evidence further showed that the employee used the answers provided to unfair advantage on the exam. Findings - SUSTAINED

**INTERFERE WITH REPORTING MISCONDUCT**

Synopsis	Action Taken
Complainant alleges that when her mother was robbed, an unidentified officer told her to call 911. When she called to complain about this, she alleges the named officer told her to call 911.	The investigation was unable to determine who allegedly told the complainant to call 911 when she drove by the scene. The evidence was conflicting as to the telephone conversation between the complainant and the named officer. However, the named officer did inform his supervisor about the phone conversation, and the supervisor did follow up by contacting complainant. Findings: CUBO – NOT SUSTAINED; Interference – EXONERATED.

**Definitions of Findings:**

**Sustained:** The allegation of misconduct is supported by the evidence.

**Not Sustained:** The evidence neither proves nor disproves the allegation of misconduct.

**Exonerated:** The event described did occur, and the actions taken by the officer(s) were lawful and proper.

**Unfounded:** The allegation of misconduct did not occur as described.

**Administratively Unfounded or Administratively Inactivated:** The case has a fundamental legal or procedural defect or the involved personnel cannot be identified. Inactivated cases may be re-opened if new information is received.

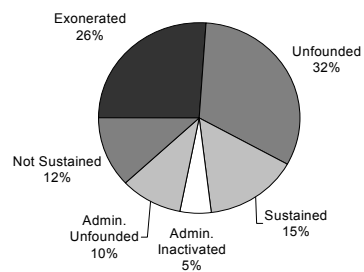
## Status of OPA Contacts to Date:

### 2002 Contacts

	December 2002	Jan. - Dec. 2002
Contact Logs	50	573
Cases Assigned for Supervisory Review	11	104
Cases Assigned for Investigation (IS; LI)	17	201
Cases Closed	12	152*
Commendations	27	1,416

\*includes 2002 cases closed in 2003

**CHART A**  
**Dispositions of Allegations in Completed Investigations**  
**2002 Cases**  
**N=291 Allegations in 152 cases**



### 2003 Contacts

	April 2003	Jan-Dec 2003
Contact Logs	41	209
Cases Assigned for Supervisory Review	7	31
Cases Assigned for Investigation (IS;LI)	10	57
Commendations	39	309